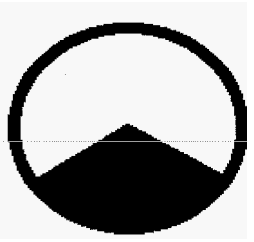
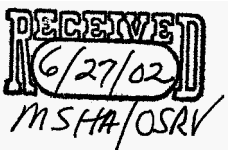


Global Stone Chemstone



June 25,2002

CERTIFIED

Mr. Marvin Nichols, Director
Office of Standards, Regulations & Variances
Mine Safety & Health Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
1100 Wilson Blvd., 21st Floor
Arlington, VA 22209-3939

Dear Mr. Nichols:

We are pleased to submit these comments on behalf of Global Stone Chemstone Corporation concerning the Mine Safety & Health Administration's ("MSHA") Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("ANPRM") related to occupational exposure to asbestos published in the March 29, 2002 Federal Register. The appended enclosure provides a description of Global Stone Chemstone Corporation's three Virginia operations and the products produced. We request that these comments be included in the formal rulemaking record. In addition, our company fully endorses the comments and oral testimony that was presented by the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association ("NSSGA") concerning the rulemaking during the comment period.

The Global Stone Chemstone Corporation shares MSHA's desire to protect the health and safety of all miners, and recognizes the need to control hazardous exposures to asbestos-containing products and materials. We support lowering the Permissible Exposure Limit ("PEL") to 0.1 f/cc, provided that only real asbestos is regulated in the new standard. It is critical that MSHA employ the appropriate definitions, and sampling/analytical methods so that other minerals (e.g., non-asbestiform varieties of the asbestos minerals) are not subject to unwarranted regulation, or inadvertently included in the sampling conducted for enforcement purposes.

Therefore, MSHA must adopt a discriminate fiber counting method that more accurately corresponds to asbestiform minerals. The current federal fiber definition (particles that are at least five microns long and have a minimum aspect ratio of 3 to 1) will count as "fibers" cleavage fragments that are common particles in mining dust. Because the environment at mines is so different from the environment that OSHA regulates, MSHA cannot simply adopt the current OSHA standard, with its "federal fiber" definition. Phase Contrast Microscopy is insufficiently sensitive to distinguish between different minerals, however, with appropriate discriminate counting rules, it could serve as an effective tool for screening samples for asbestiform fiber content. To properly classify the asbestiform fibers on a sample, it is necessary to use electron microscopy analysis. Similarly, any regulations of "take home contamination" must focus on the true asbestos and asbestos containing products, as defined in the OSHA and EPA asbestos standards, rather than applying such requirements to all and any level of mineral exposures at mines, pits and quarries.

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An Oglebay Norton Company

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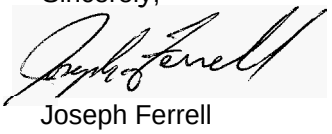
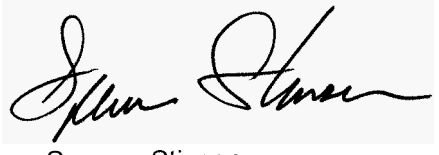
In addition, MSHA must critically review the technical and economic feasibility of any future asbestos standard in accordance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act and the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act. Moreover, MSHA must comply with the new U.S. Department of Labor guidelines for ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility and integrity of information that forms the basis for regulatory decisions. See DOL Draft Information Quality Guidelines, published May 1, 2002. Inappropriate or arbitrary decisions as to the classification of minerals, based on flawed scientific conclusions, could well undermine the ability of many small mines to remain in business, while at the same time failing to provide any health benefits for miners. Thank you for your consideration of our perspective.

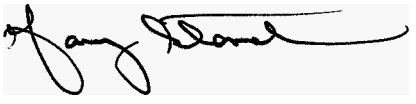
Sincerely,



Joseph Ferrell
VP & Area Manager



Spencer Stinson
General Manager



Gary Stoneburner
Environmental, Health & Safety Manager

Enclosure

cc: Jim Sharpe